

Teaching Strategies



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The Question Can is the most basic strategy to teaching not only questioning skills but also a great way to introduce primary sources to your little ones. Share how each question word helps us learn more about a source.

WHO? = People
WHEN? = Time
WHERE? = Place
WHY? = Explain
WHAT? = Explain
HOW? = Explain

Add these stems in a can. Have students look closely at the source before choosing a stem. Chart or add each question to a question wall. If you use sticky notes you can have your students place the question directly on the sources. Afterwards you can look through each question to see if they can help us answer the anchor or essential question you have presented to the students.

I see, I think, & I Wonder approach can be used with any age. This approach is a modification of the Library of Congress Analysis Tool (Observe, Reflect, & Question). You can use chart paper or create a graphic to capture what students see, think, and wonder about the source.

I like to have students take a dry erase marker to circle the evidence from the source that helps support their thinking. Again, we always go back to that essential question to help guide thinking and to notice more details about the source and topic of study. This approach is a great way to teach students to think, question and build upon their knowledge.

Name: _____		
 I see ...	 I think ...	 I wonder ...

Variations:

Add these stems onto sticks and pass around or put on different colored sticky notes for students to place directly on a source.

Sometimes I give one source to a small group and have them complete an analysis together as a group, and then they have to share it with the whole group. Once each small group has shared their findings, together the whole class creates a summary from the sources.

Fold

Zoom-In is a strategy where students uncover a primary source image piece by piece in order slow down the analysis and allow students to notice more details and think more deeply about a source. Also, complex sources with more detail and symbolism, like illustrations or political cartoons, work best with this type of strategy.



This strategy works well with the whole class using a smart board. Or, place students in small groups of four with an analysis tool for each student to record (observe, reflect, and question). Have students study the first piece silently for a minute. Then have students share their observations, reflections, and questions in small groups. Repeat this step with each new piece. I limit the zoom-in to 3 pieces, although 2 pieces is more time manageable.

Variation: Create a specific question for each piece to help target the analysis.

Resource: Zoom-In Strategy, http://www.tpsnva.org/tps/step1/workshop/4/m_a/zooms/index.php

Museum Gallery Walk is one of my favorite activities to teach with primary sources. I like to hang at least 6 to 8 sources around on chart paper. I post a graphic and have them use a clipboard and walk around in small groups to record silently and on their own. Sometimes I play music with the era to get the students thinking and more engaged into the period. I set my timer for a minute for each source. Then I allow them to go back with their group and discuss and share their findings with their friends. One person from each group writes a group summary that they will share with the whole group. This activity does not have to be completed silently.



Variation: Tape the source in the center of a chart paper and have students use different color markers to analyze the source; "I See" in red, "I think" in green, and "I wonder" in black.

Resource for strategy:

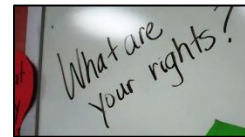
Gallery Walk, <https://www.facinghistory.org/for-educators/educator-resources/teaching-strategies/gallery-walk-teaching-strateg>

Big Paper is a silent collaborative thinking type of activity using chart paper with a primary source taped in the middle. Students use different color markers to walk around the room



and comment on the chart paper. I set my timer for a minute for each source. I post one or two questions with each source on the chart. Sometimes I have the students observe and reflect upon a primary source quickly then ask a question. This changes their thinking of what they share on the chart. Sometimes the students have to read what others have written and write a particular stem, for example, "I agree", "I disagree", or "I'd like to add". I have also had students compare and contrast right on the chart paper so students can see a definite focus.

Once a chart has been completed, I always have the students summarize what the chart tells about the essential or anchor question that has been posted and shared before the activity. This is important anytime you are analyzing a primary source(s).



Variation: "The Big Paper activity can also be structured as a gallery walk. With this structure, Big Papers are taped to the walls or placed on tables, and students comment on the Big Papers in silence, at their own pace."

Resource for strategy:

Big Paper, <https://www.facinghistory.org/for-educators/educator-resources/teaching-strategies/big-paper-building-silent-con>

A Common Core Connection

The use of primary sources naturally meets a variety of Common Core State Standards. The Common Core State Standards, Reading Informational Text (RI) and Speaking and Listening (SL), can be met when integrating the collaborative strategies mentioned above. If literature is included into the analysis with a primary source, at least one Reading Literature (RL) standard can be met. All the strategies above prepare students to write. Assign a writing task such as a summary, journal entry, or "quick write" after the primary source analysis to meet at least one writing standard (W).

Additional Resources

Visible Thinking Website, <http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org/>

Books: Making Thinking Visible and Creating Cultures of Thinking by Ron Ritchhart